

Application Serial No.: 10/519,854
Amdt. dated January 27, 2006
Reply to Office Action of November 7, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Office Action dated November 7, 2005 and the references cited therein have been carefully considered. In response to the Office Action, Applicants have amended the specification and Claims 7, 14 and 17 and has added new Claim 18 which, when considered with the remarks set forth below, are deemed to place the case in condition for allowance. As a result of the present Amendment, Claims 1-18 remain in the case for continued prosecution.

In the Office Action, the drawings have been objected to because reference numeral "27" has been used in paragraph [0035], lines 6-8 of the specification to designate both the insertion opening and the male part. In response, Applicants have amended paragraph [0035] of the specification to replace the first occurrence of reference numeral "27" with the correct reference numeral --12-- for the insertion opening. As a result, the insertion opening is now correctly identified in the specification with reference numeral 12, as correctly shown in the drawings, whereas the male part is identified with reference numeral 27, as correctly shown in the drawings. No changes to the drawings are necessary. Accordingly, it is believed that the objection to the drawings has been overcome.

The specification has also been objected to based on various informalities. In response, Applicants have amended paragraphs [0031], [0048], [0049] and [0051] to address each informality set forth in the Office Action. Upon further reviewing the specification, Applicants have also amended paragraph [0040] to correct an error found therein. Accordingly, it is believed that the objections to the specification have been overcome.

Also in the Office Action, Claims 14 and 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite or incomplete. In response Applicants have amended Claim 7 to clarify the two opposed guide wings for receiving a rib like wall section. Applicants have also amended Claims 14 and 17 to clarify the structural cooperative relationships of the spring means and the guide means. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the §112 rejections to Claims 7, 14 and 17 have been overcome.

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Further in the Office Action, Claim 1 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,848,924 to Frisch and Claims 2-17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Frisch patent in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,676,436 to Gaidosch and U.S. Patent No. 5,522,733 to White et al. In particular, the Examiner states that the Frisch patent discloses a connection member with a signal contact 22 disposed in a socket of the connection member. The Examiner states that the signal contact 22 has a knife edge with a width at least equal to the diameter of the signal conductor 13. With respect to the dependent claims, the Examiner states that the Gaidosch and the White et al. patents disclose knife edges having different shapes.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of Claim 1 based on the Frisch patent. In particular, it is respectfully submitted that, contrary to the Examiner's assertion, the signal contact 22 disclosed in the Frisch patent does not have a knife edge with a width at least equal to the diameter of the signal conductor 13, as set forth in Claim 1. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 1, and the claims that depend therefrom, patentably distinguish over the prior art.

Claim 1 defines a connection member for a fluid line, wherein the fluid line has a signal conductor disposed in its wall. The connection member includes a signal contact having a male part adapted to stick into the signal conductor on insertion of the fluid line into the connection member. The male part of the signal contact is constituted by a knife edge, whose width is equal to at least the diameter of the signal conductor to be contacted and which on penetration from the end is adapted to split the signal conductor into an externally placed and an internally placed line limb.

In stark contrast, the signal contact 22 described in the Frisch patent is a "contact spike" which, by definition, terminates at a sharp point. As such, the contact spike disclosed in the Frisch patent is "directly inserted into the line strands" and "penetrates it." (See col. 1, lines 53-65 and col. 3, lines 40-50.) It is further stated that the "contact spikes slip into the line strands in the longitudinal direction and accordingly form a contact area which is longer than in the case of transverse insertion." (See col. 1, line 67- col. 2, line 3.) Thus, it is clear

that the contact spike described in the Frisch patent is not constituted by a knife edge, as defined in Claim 1.

Moreover, there is absolutely no mention in the Frisch patent of the contact spike 22 having a width greater than the diameter of the conductor, nor is there any teaching or suggestion of the contact spike splitting the conductor into two separate portions, as set forth in Claim 1. Instead, as discussed above, the Frisch patent describes the contact spike as being centrally inserted into the end of signal conductor. Such is also clearly shown in Figure 3 of the drawings of the Frisch patent, wherein it can be seen that the diameter of the contact spike 22 is smaller than the diameter of the signal conductor 13.

As a result of the contact spike 22 slipping into the signal conductor 13, the end of the conductor will encircle the centrally disposed pin-point end of the spike in a coaxial fashion. This is very different than a knife edge splitting the conductor "into an externally placed and an internally placed line limb," as defined in Claim 1.

Indeed, as discussed in paragraphs [0002]-[0006] of the specification of the present application, the present invention improves upon such prior art "pin-like signal contacts" by providing greater flexibility in contact to conductor alignment and by increasing the contact to conductor contact area so that reliable electrical connection can be achieved. This is accomplished by providing a knife edge, as opposed to a pin point, to the signal contact. The knife edge has a width that is greater than the diameter of the signal conductor so that the conductor will be split into two portions. None of the cited references, taken alone or combined, teaches or suggests this feature. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claim 1, and the claims that depend therefrom, patentably distinguish over the prior art.

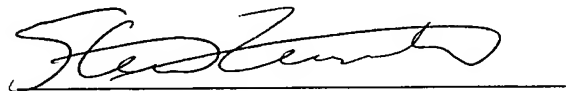
Applicants have also added new Claim 18, which, for the same reasons as set forth above, patentably distinguishes over the prior art. Specifically, new Claim 18 defines a connection member for a fluid line having a signal conductor disposed in a wall thereof. The connection member includes a signal contact for making electrical connection with the signal conductor disposed in the wall of the fluid line. The signal contact includes a knife edge

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having a cutting length equal to at least the diameter of the signal conductor, wherein the knife edge is adapted to split an end of the signal conductor into two separate portions upon penetration of the knife edge into the signal conductor end. None of the cited references, taken alone or combined, discloses a signal contact having a knife edge with a cutting length greater than or equal to the diameter of the signal conductor. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that new Claim 18 patentably distinguishes over the prior art.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, favorable consideration and allowance of the application with Claims 1-18 are respectfully solicited. If the Examiner believes that a telephone interview would assist in moving the application toward allowance, he is respectfully invited to contact the Applicants' attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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